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ABSTRACT

The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a national information network designed to provide users with ready access to education literature. One of the clearinghouses is the ERIC Counseling and Personnel Services Clearinghouse (CAPS). Established at The University of Michigan in 1966, CAPS was one of the original ERIC clearinghouses. Topics covered by CAPS include: the training, supervision, and continuing professional development of counseling, student services, and human services professionals; counseling theories, methods, and practices; the roles of counselors, social workers, and psychologists in all educational settings at all educational levels; career planning and development; self-esteem and self-efficacy; marriage and family counseling; and mental health services to special populations such as substance abusers, pregnant teenagers, students at risk, public offenders, etc. CAPS can help counseling professionals find the information they need, give worldwide visibility to articles and resources that counselors produce, provide counselors with high quality, low-cost resources, and introduce counselors to CAPS information tools such as CounselorQuest and Treasure Chest. (ABL)

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ERIC DIGEST

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ERIC/CAPS–Expanding Counselor Choice

Garry R. Walz and Jeanne C. Bleuer

What is ERIC?

The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a national information network designed to provide users with ready access to education literature. Established in 1966 to make government-sponsored educational research available from a single source, ERIC now collects, analyzes, and distributes information from public and private, local, state, federal, and international sources.

Managed by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), the ERIC system consists of 16 Clearinghouses, a small number of Adjunct Clearinghouses, and several system support components. These support components include the ERIC Processing and Reference Facility, ACCESS ERIC, the ERIC Document Reproduction Service, public and private publishers (for example, Oryx Press), and commercial information services.

What is Contained in the ERIC Database?

The ERIC database—the largest education database in the world—now contains almost 730,000 records of documents and journal articles. Users can access the ERIC database via telephone line from their computer to an online information service, on the Compact Disc-Read Only Memory (CD-ROM) system, or through print and microfiche indexes.

The ERIC database is a bibliographic database of citations and summaries of documents and journal articles. Documents are primarily unpublished or fugitive materials including research studies, program descriptions and evaluations, conference proceedings, curriculum materials, bibliographies, and others. In 1990, more than 13,000 documents were selected, cataloged, indexed, abstracted, and announced in ERIC's monthly abstract journal *Resources in Education* (RIE). Most documents announced in RIE are available in microfiche or paper copy.

Similarly, ERIC announces current journal literature in a *separate monthly publication titled Current Index to Journals in Education* (CIJE). The journal citations contain short summaries of articles from nearly 800 education-related journals. In 1990, 18,032 new journal article citations were added to the ERIC database.

Where is ERIC?

Over 3,000 locations around the world receive ERIC materials on a regular basis. Most documents entered into the ERIC database are filmed and stored on microfiche. ERIC microfiche collections are found at many locations throughout the world, including locations in every state and in more than 60 countries. In addition to the microfiche collections, most of these locations also provide clients with ERIC database search services, either online or on CD-ROM.

For someone without easy access to an ERIC microfiche collection, reprints of ERIC documents can be ordered, in microfiche or paper copy, from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service. Orders to EDRS can be placed by mail, by telephone (a toll-free number: 1-800-443-ERIC), by FAX (703-440-1408), or through online vendors (e.g., *Dialog* and *Orbit*). In 1990, EDRS responded to 12,200 "on-demand" orders for ERIC document reprints.

The journal articles cited in ERIC, however, present a different situation. Each journal is copyrighted by its own publisher. Users with access to public or university libraries (many of which provide public services) can usually obtain journal articles there or through inter-library loan.

How Much was the ERIC Database Used in 1990?

ERIC was the third-most searched database in the country, the second-most searched database among academic libraries, and the most popular database used by public libraries in the United States and Canada. ERIC is the most popular database on CD-ROM in public libraries and information centers, and the second-most popular database used in research, specialized, and university libraries. The popularity of ERIC in Europe has also grown considerably over the years. Today, ERIC is the fourth-most popular optical media product in European libraries.

Several thousand university, school and public libraries now have CD-ROM work stations dedicated to ERIC, which clients use on their own or with minimal assistance and without much recordkeeping.

What is ERIC/CAPS?

Located around the country, ERIC Clearinghouses are responsible for acquiring, processing, and disseminating information about a particular aspect or subject area of education, such as the ERIC Counseling and Personnel Services Clearinghouse (CAPS) at The University of Michigan.

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The ERIC Counseling and Personnel Services Clearinghouse (CAPS) was one of the original clearinghouses established in 1966 at The University of Michigan and has been in continuous operation since that date. Its scope area includes counseling, student services, and other human services such as school psychology and school social work at all age levels and in all settings (educational, governmental, community, and business). Topics covered by ERIC/CAPS include: the training, supervision, and continuing professional development of counseling, student services, and human services professionals; counseling theories, methods, and practices; the roles of counselors, social workers, and psychologists in all educational settings at all educational levels; career planning and development; self-esteem and self-efficacy; marriage and family counseling; and mental health services to special populations such as substance abusers, pregnant teenagers, students at risk, public offenders, etc.

What Can ERIC/CAPS Do For You?

1. *We can help you find the information you need.*

   Whether we help you to use the print indexes (RIE and CIJE), an online search service, or the new ERIC on CD-ROM, our expertise in retrieving information related to counseling and human services can help you locate a wealth of material related to your particular area of interest. You can learn more about ERIC/CAPS services by attending a workshop or telephoning CAPS for further information.

2. *We can give worldwide visibility to the articles and resource materials you produce.*

   ERIC is the most frequently used educational database in the world and all CAPS products are input into the database. No other source can provide such worldwide visibility. Additionally, CAPS markets its own publications through a wide variety of different sources that acquaint counselors and non-counselors with their availability.

3. *We can provide you with high quality, low-cost resources.*

   Ranging from two-page information digests to in-depth monographs and books of readings, ERIC/CAPS publications have proved to be highly valuable resources that you can use for your own professional development or in classes you teach or workshops you conduct. A new product, CAPS video, has proved to be extremely well received because of its focus on topics of high interest, its "realist" flavor, and its low cost.

4. *We will introduce you to CAPS "fast-break" information tools!*

   Most of us do not lack for information, we typically have more information than we can use. What we *do* need is the ability to retrieve and update quality information on topics where an informed and effective response is required on our part. To assist counselors in being effective "fast breakers" CAPS has developed three new tools:

   CounselorQuest—Periodically, ERIC/CAPS reviews the entire database of *ERIC Digests* and identifies the best and most relevant digests for counselor-identified high priority topics. These are then compiled in a single volume entitled *CounselorQuest*. Indexed alphabetically by subject and education level, this volume offers the user a desktop resource for rapid search and retrieval of highly informative and practical resources.

   CounselorQuest Update Pack—To fill the gap between the issuance of new editions of *CounselorQuest*, CAPS has developed this new tool for counselors. These packs will provide useful information and practical strategies for responding to fast-breaking counseling challenges.

   Treasure Chest—Provides highly useful ideas and resources for each of more than 40 topics nominated by school counselors as "most important." Presented in an attractive 3-inch binder; will be updated semi-annually.

Conclusion

ERIC/CAPS can assist you to share your ideas with others or locate resources which will assist you to be a more effective counselor. It expands your choices and competencies! To be put on the mailing list to receive a periodical newsletter write or call: ERIC/CAPS, 2108 School of Education, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1259; phone: (313) 764-9492; fax: (313) 747-2425.

References

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